

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. Reconsideration of the subject patent application in view of the present remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 are amended.

New claim 3 is added.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 2 has been amended to comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Thus, the rejection as it applies to claim 2 should be withdrawn.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,823,416 to Haji in view of Japanese Patent No. 2000-212777 to Soma et al. and U.S. Patent No. 4,588,185 to Shoda et al.

Regarding the amended claim 1, none of Haji, Soma et al. and Shoda et al., alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or renders foreseeable that the supporting members in the substrate transporting direction is positioned by the fixed members. Haji and Soma et al. do not disclose the above supporting members, as admitted by the Examiner in the Office action which

states that Haji and Soma et al. fail to disclose a multi-structure holding means. The Office action states that Shoda et al. discloses a plurality of supporting members (12). However, there is no disclosure in Shoda et al. that the supporting members (12) are positioned in the substrate transporting direction by the fixed members (15). According to Shoda et al., the spindle 24 is rotated at the predetermined angle within the horizontal plane, thereby the sheet object 10 is transferred from the end point of the carrier way (shown in FIG. 1(a)) to the working position on the spinner head 25 (shown in FIG. 2(b)) (Shoda et al.; column 4, lines 61-66; "FIG. 2(b)" should be "FIG. 1(b)"). Thus, the substrate (10) transporting direction in Shoda et al. is a rotational direction of the spindle (24) from the FIG. 1(a) position to the FIG. 1(b) position. As shown in FIG. 1(a) and FIG. 1(b), the supporting members (12) are not positioned in the above rotational direction by the fixed members (15). The direction at which the end portion of each of the supporting members (12) is connected to the transfer frame member (14) is not the above rotational direction. Accordingly, the combination of Haji, Soma et al. and Shoda et al. does not meet all of the limitations of claim 1. Therefore, the asserted combination of Haji, Soma et al. and Shoda et al. does not render claim 1 obvious. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection as it applies to claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Regarding new claim 3, none of Haji, Soma et al. and Shoda et al., alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or renders foreseeable that the guide members are mounted on the supporting members by fitting the positioning pins in the positioning holes.

In consideration of the foregoing analysis, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to


Appl. No. 10/593,385  
Amdt. Dated: February 1, 2010  
Reply to Office action of November 9, 2009

initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No.: NGB-41176.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: February 1, 2010